

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

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SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3181

USNMR SHAPE

USDOCOSOUTH

USLOSACLANT

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 3617

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM,NATO

SUBJECT: UK PAPER ON MBFR NEGOTIATING POSITION: JULY 30 NAC

SUMMARY: AFTER PRESENTATION OF UK PAPER (TEXT IN SEPTTEL)
IN JULY 30 NAC, CANADIAN AND NETHERLANDS REPS GAVE INITIAL
REACTIONS THAT UK GOAL OF PARITY IN "COMBAT CAPABILITY" WOULD
BE DIFFICULT TO DEFINE AMONG ALLIES AND DIFFICULT TO NEGOTIATE.
RUMSFELD (US) OBSERVED THAT US LIKE UK HAD STUDIED IDEA
OF A SIMPLE INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR A 10 PERCENT REDUCTION IN US
AND SOVIET FORCES, BUT U.S. HAD FOUND THAT THIS CONCEPT LACKED
AN OVERALL RATIONALE AND THUS FAVORED PROJECTING A SECOND PHASE
WHEN COMMON CEILING WOULD BE SOUGHT. SYG PROPOSED THAT NAC
MEET AUGUST 3 ON BELGIAN PAPER CIRCULATED JULY 20 (SEPTTEL),
US PAPER CIRCULATED IN RESTRICTED NAC ON JULY 27, AND NEW
UK PAPER.
END SUMMARY.
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1. SYG INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT UK HAD REQUESTED SPECIAL NAC
TO PRESENT PAPER ON MBFR NEGOTIATING POSITION, AND INVITED UK
REP (THOMSON) TO INTRODUCE PAPER. IN INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,
THOMSON SAID THE UK CONTRIBUTION SHOULD BE SEEN AS COMMENTARY

ON APPROACHES OUTLINED IN US APRIL 30 PAPER, AND DID NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT EITHER RECENT BELGIAN PAPER OR US PRESENTATION ON JULY 27. OBJECTIONS OF UK EFFORT WERE DIFFERENT FROM US APRIL 30 PAPER (AND, THOMSON SAID, FROM THOSE OF US JULY 27 PAPER AS WELL, AT LEAST FROM HIS INITIAL READING), SINCE US SEEMED TO BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED ABOUT "OUTCOMES." UK DOES NOT BELIEVE IT WISE TO ELABORATE OUTCOMES NOW; ALLIES SHOULD INSTEAD BY DISCUSSING TACTICS, AND AS SUGGESTED IN THE DRAFT "STEERING BRIEF," A "FRAMEWORK" FOR THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING POSITION. ALLIES SHOULD NOT PLAN TO PUT FORTH A CUT AND DRIED NEGOTIATING PROPOSAL AT THE OUTSET. ON THE OTHER HAND THEY SHOULD HAVE AN AGREED CONCEPT ON THE ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE OF REDUCTIONS THAT THE ALLIED SIDE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT. THOMSON, HOWEVER, PRAISED US CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CALLED ON OTHER ALLIES TO INTRODUCE EQUALLY PROFESSIONAL PIECES OF WORK. THOMSON THEN WENT OVER SALIENT POINTS IN TEXT OF PAPER AS CIRCULATED IN COUNCIL AND TRANSMITTED IN FULL SEPTEL.

2. AFTER A SHORT BREAK FOR FIRST READING BY PERMREPS OF UK PAPER, SYG PROPOSED THAT ANOTHER MEETING OF NAC BE HELD ON AUGUST 3 TO CONSIDER BELGIAN, US AND UK PAPERS ON ALLIED NEGOTIATION POSITION. HE THEN ASKED FOR INITIAL REACTIONS BASED ON FIRST READING.

3. MARSHALL (CANADA) OBSERVED THAT UK HAD "ACCIDENTALLY" IGNORED CANADIAN FORCES IN SETTING UP NEW DISTINCTION BETWEEN US AND EUROPEAN FORCES, AS OPPOSED TO STATIONED AND INDIGENOUS FORCES. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER UK FORESAW ANY DISTINCTION IN FUTURE BETWEEN INDIGENOUS FORCES OF BENELUX COUNTRIES AND BENELUX FORCES IN GERMANY. NOTING UK PREFERENCE FOR PARITY BASED ON COMBAT CAPABILITY, RATHER THAN A COMMON CEILING IN TERMS OF PERSONNEL (PARA 21 OF UK TEXT), MARSHALL SAID THAT FINDING A COMMON CONCEPT AMONG ALLIES FOR DEFINING PARITY IN COMBAT CAPABILITY WOULD BE DIFFICULT, AND IT WOULD BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO PRESENT TO SOVIETS.

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HE ASKED UK TO AMPLIFY WHAT IT MEANS BY TERM "COMBAT CAPABILITY", WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS JUST MEN AND EQUIPMENT, OR COULD INCLUDE A RANGE OF ADDITIONAL FACTORS, EVEN MORALE. THOMSON REPLIED THAT OMISSION OF CANADIAN FORCES WAS UNINTENTIONAL, AND UK WOULD VIEW CANADIANS AS "HONORARY EUROPEANS" FOR PURPOSES OF ITS DISTINCTION. UK HAD DELIBERATELY AVOIDED DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN STATIONED AND INDIGENOUS EUROPEAN FORCES. WITH REGARD TO MARSHALL'S POINT ON COMBAT CAPABILITY, THOMSON SAID SUBJECT IS INDEED DIFFICULT TO ASSESS, BUT MILITARY COMMITTEE AND DEFENSE MINISTERS WERE FREQUENTLY ASKED TO MAKE SUCH ASSESSMENTS, AND ALLIES SHOULD NOT SHY AWAY FROM MAKING JUDGEMENTS IN MBFR CONTEXT.

4. BUWALDA (NETHERLANDS) WELCOMED WHAT APPEARED TO HIM AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY THE UK OF A POSSIBLE SECOND PHASE OF MBFR TO INCLUDE INDIGENOUS FORCES. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT UK PREFERENCE FOR PARITY IN COMBAT CAPABILITY, WHICH SEEMED AT FIRST TO BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR NUMBERS OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT. BUT THE UK IN ITS CONCLUSIONS CAME BACK TO SPECIFIC NUMBERS. DID ALLIES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO DEAL IN NUMBERS IN DISCUSSING MBFR? OTHERWISE, THEY WOULD MERELY BE PLAYING WITH WORDS. BUWALDA ALSO NOTED THAT UK (IN PARA 10) GAVE VIEW THAT SOVIETS WITHDRAWN FORCES SHOULD BE DISBANDED AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE A CONSTRAINT AGAINST ANY REPLACEMENT OF WITHDRAWN FORCES. ON THE OTHER HAND, UK IN PARA 14 SEEMED TO BE PROPOSING VERIFICATION BY UNITS. BUWALDA SAID IT WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTED THAT ALLIES COULD PROBABLY VERIFY DISBANDMENT OF UNITS, BUT HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THEY COULD BE CERTAIN THAT OTHER UNITS ON SOVIET TERRITORY WERE NOT BEING FORMED AT SOME SUBSEQUENT TIME. THOMSON REPLIED INDIRECTLY TO BUWALDA'S

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POINT ON COMBAT CAPABILITY THAT UK HAD NOT SEEN US PAPER OF JULY 27 BEFORE INTRODUCING ITS OWN CONTRIBUTION. IN THE UK VIEW, THE NEW US PAPER DID DEAL WITH COMBAT CAPABILITY, AT LEAST IN PART, BY SETTING THE REDUCTION OF A SOVIET TANK ARMY AS A GOAL. THUS THERE MIGHT BE SOME CONVERGENCE IN THE US AND UK VIEWS ON TERMS AND NUMBERS FOR ESTABLISHING PARITY. RE DISBANDMENT AND VERIFICATION

PROCEDURES, THE UK PAPER DID NOT GO INTO DETAIL ON THESE SUBJECTS AND FURTHER WORK WOULD BE NEEDED. REVERTING TO COMBAT CAPABILITY, SYG ADDED THE THOUGHT THAT SOVIETS AS WELL AS ALLIES MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO ARGUE ON THE BASIS OF COMBAT CAPABILITY, AND THERE MIGHT BE SOME DANGERS FOR THE ALLIES IN GOING INTO RELATIVE COMBAT CAPABILITY TOO DEEPLY.

5. RUMSFELD (US) RECALLED PARA 11 OF US PRESENTATION OF JULY 27. US HAD STUDIED POSSIBILITY OF A SIMPLE US/SOVIET REDUCTION OF 10 PERCENT OF GROUND PERSONNEL, ALONG LINES UK NOW APPEARED TO BE SUGGESTING. THIS PROPOSAL WAS
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SIMPLE, PLAUSIBLE AND WOULD LEAD TO AN ASYMMETRICAL RESULT. HOWEVER, IT ALSO HAD WEAKNESS OF NOT CONTAINING ANY BROADER EXPLANATION OR RATIONALE, THAT WOULD MAKE THE PROPOSAL CONVINCING TO PUBLIC OPINION, AND NOT CONTAINING ANY SELF-EVIDENT REASON WHY REDUCTION IS SET AT 10 PERCENT AND NOT HIGHER. IT WOULD THUS LEAVE ALLIES VULNERABLE TO A SOVIET COUNTER PROPOSAL FOR A MUCH HIGHER PERCENTAGE REDUCTION OR TO SOVIET EFFORTS TO APPLY A 10 PERCENT CUT TO ALL NATO FORCES ACROSS THE BOARD. THE UK HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD RESIST ANY SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR MORE THAN 10 PERCENT REDUCTIONS IN US GROUND FORCES PERSONNEL; IN THE UK PLAN, WHAT GROUNDS WOULD THE ALLIES HAVE TO ARGUE AGAINST A DEEPER INITIAL CUT? THOMSON SAID UK OPTION WAS A VARIANT OF SECOND US OPTION IN APRIL 30 PAPER, AND WAS BASED ON SAME BASIC CRITERION OF MILITARY SECURITY WHICH US HAD ADOPTED AT THAT TIME -- NAMELY THAT NATO REDUCTIONS SHOULD NOT RESULT IN ANY LESSENING OF NATO SECURITY. UK HAS TAKEN NOTE OF PARA 11 OF NEW US PRESENTATION, BUT DOES NOT ACCEPT THE LOGIC IN IT. IN FACT, THOMSON SAID, UK BELIEVES THAT US PROPOSAL ITSELF, AS OUTLINED LATER IN U.S. PAPER, FAILS TO MEET SOME OF THE CRITERIA IN THIS PARAGRAPH. RUMSFELD TOOK ISSUE WITH THOMSON ON HIS COMPARISON OF NEW UK APPROACH AND SECOND US OPTION IN APRIL 30 PAPER. EARLIER US OPTION HAD BEEN DESIGNED TO REACH OVERALL PARITY, AND THUS FITTED INTO A CLEAR CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK. PART OF THE REASON FOR NEW US PRESENTATION WAS REVISION OF US ESTIMATES OF SOVIET STRENGTHS WHICH NECESSITATES A TWO-PHASED APPROACH IN ORDER TO REACH EVENTUAL PARITY IN REDUCTION ZONE. THOMSON REPLIED THAT UK TOO HAS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, BUT THAT GOAL IS TO REACH COMMON CEILING IN TERMS OF COMBAT CAPABILITY, NOT MERELY IN NUMBERS.

6. KRISTVIK (NORWAY) EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT TACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF NEW UK PAPER. UK HAD GIVEN VIEW IN DRAFT STEERING BRIEF AND CURRENT PAPER THAT SOVIETS MIGHT SEE ADVANTAGE IN SPINNING OUT NEGOTIATIONS. UK IN CURRENT PRESENTATION NOW SEEMED TO BE SAYING THAT ALLIES TOO SHOULD GO SLOW. WOULD THIS NOT BE PLAYING INTO SOVIET HANDS? THOMSON RESTATED WELL-KNOWN UK MISGIVINGS ABOUT ENTIRE MBFR ENTERPRISE, BUT ADMITTED THAT MBFR CONTAINS A MIXTURE OF

POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES BOTH FOR SOVIETS AND FOR
ALLIES. AS FOR ANY APPARENT DISCREPANCIES IN THE TWO UK
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PAPERS, THE UK PROGNOSIS ON SOVIET ATTITUDES IN PARA 6 OF
JULY 30 TEXT APPLIED TO THE WHOLE PERIOD OF NEGOTIATIONS.
JUDGMENTS IN THE DRAFT STEERING BRIEF WERE ONLY SUGGESTIONS
ON HOW THE ALLIES SHOULD HANDLE THEMSELVES IN THE INITIAL THREE
TO FOUR MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS.
RUMSFELD

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